

NEWS RELEASE

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| Joint Information Center 801-538-1339 |
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Negative Anthrax Test at Airport

Statement by Dr. Scott Williams, Deputy Director
Utah Department of Health
February 12, 2002

Tonight the Utah Department of Health received a false positive on a screening test for anthrax. Four subsequent tests by the Centers for Disease Control confirmed there was no anthrax present and no public health concern. It is appropriate that the public know about the testing and the State of Utah's response.

At approximately 5:30 this afternoon, regular screening indicated the possible presence at the Salt Lake International Airport of anthrax. Further testing, which is significantly more accurate, commenced immediately. A response team from the Utah Department of Health, Center for Disease Control, Utah Olympic Public Safety Command, and Federal Bureau of investigation was convened. Governor Leavitt and Mayor Anderson were consulted and emergency response teams at the airport and in the community were placed on alert.

This evening at approximately 8 p.m. definitive tests conducted by the Center for Disease Control and Department of Health established the samples were negative. The relevant response teams were not deployed because there is no danger to public health.

Further inquiries should be referred to the state's Joint Information Center at 801-538-1339.

Note: contact the Utah Media Center at 801-594-0112 for videotape from today's press conference.